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ABSTRACT

The meaning, operation, and impact of institutional racism in higher education are examined with attention to both past and present conditions. Institutional racism is examined with reference to several specific issues: barriers to the entry of blacks, as both students and staff, into American higher education: curriculum and academic programs: and treatment and on-campus experiences of blacks once entered. Brief attention is given to facilities, and other differentials between white and black institutions of higher education, as well as the relationship between black communities and white universities. The role of the status allocation functions of colleges and universities, intergroup competition and conflict in the larger society, and on campus, organizational imperatives of the institution, general societal attitudes about race, and attitudes and bigotry are considered. A distinction is made between structural and adaptive reform in attempts to combat institutional racism and its effects in academia. A bibliography is included. (Author/SW)

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# "PLUS CA CHANGE...?": RACISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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"PLUS CA CHANGE...?": RACISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

> Racism is any activity by individuals, groups, institutions, or cultures that treats human beings unjustly because of color and rationalizes that treatment by attributing to them undersirable biological, psychological, social, or cultural characteristics.
>
> Robert W. Terry (1970)

Racism, in belief and in behavior, has always been an integral part of American society. Despite variation in the forms and ways in which it has been expressed, no aspect of society has been entirely untouched by it. Despite enormous struggle and many changes in attitudes and practice, it remains a highly salient factor in the experiences of racial minorities. In this paper I would like to discuss briefly a particular set of issues involving racism, that of institutional racism in higher education in the United States.

There are a variety of ways of defining institutional racism. In this paper I am following the usage of Jones (1972: 6) who defines institutional racism as follows:

> Institutional racism has two meanings.... First it is the institutional extension of individual racist beliefs; this consists primarily of using and manipulating duly constituted institutions so as to maintain a racist advantage over others. Second, it is the by-product of certain institutional practices which operate to restrict on a racial basis the choices, rights, mobility, and access of groups of individuals. These consequences may not be intended, but they are not the less real for being simply de facto.

Viewed in this way, institutional racism can be seen as having ideological, attitudinal, behavioral and structural dimensions. We will look at some of these in terms of higher education.

It should be noted that while much of this discussion may apply to all racial minorities, specific emphasis is given to the experiences of black Americans. Further, by higher education I refer collectively to the nearly three thousand institutions providing postsecondary schooling in the United States, primarily two- and four-year colleges, and universities, rather than to those schools providing only specialized technical or vocational training.

I think the importance of questions of racism in higher education is clear. Colleges and universities are a significant element in the institutional life of this nation. They serve a variety of critical functions and roles (a point to which we return below), not least as gatekeepers in the distribution of groups and individuals in the stratification system. In short, higher education plays a major role in issues of social, economic and racial inequality. Further, we have yet to find an effective answer to the question posed by Althauser, Spivack and Amsell (1975: 5): "How well can a society use higher education to engender the success or personal growth of individuals, and to achieve such collective goals as the reduction of elimination of discrimination at the same time?"

In addition, as Jordan (1975) and other observers have noted, American colleges and universities not only educate, but are themselves major economic entities, employing over 700,000 faculty and administrators and generating annually over five billion dollars in economic activity--not counting construction costs, employment of thousands of staff persons, and institutional purchases. In their economic as well as in their educational roles, colleges and universities have critical impact on minority employment and mobility opportunities. Unfortunately, as economic (and educational)

entities, they have been often "as discriminatory as the most recalcitrant and backward corporations" (Jordan, 1975: 160). At the same time, higher education has long enjoyed a self-image as being possibly the most liberal institutional arena in the United States, a self-image which has made higher education notably blind all too often to its own racist sins, and equally resistant to remedy them.

Institutional racism in higher education may be examined in terms of several issues: For example, access and entry of blacks and other minorities--whether students, faculty or staff--into higher education; most particularly into predominantly white institution attrition, and the on-campus experiences of black and minority students; curriculum and academic programs; differentials between predominantly black and predominantly white institutions; or the impact on or benefit to minority communities of predominantly white colleges and universities. To understand the ways in which these issues may be manifested it will be helpful to look at what might be termed contextual factors which play a role in the various expressions of institutional racism in colleges and universities, collectively and singly.

The first of these is widespread racial bigotry and discrimination in American society as a whole. Racial minorities have long been victims of segregation and exclusion in all areas: housing, employment, religion, politics, and, of course, education at all levels. Colleges and universities have been no less racist and exclusionary than any other institution, whether as institutional actors or in terms of individual students, faculty and staff. Historically, this meant either the total exclusion of racial minorities from higher education, or severely restricted access. Until the

founding of black colleges and universities starting with Cheyney State College in 1839 and Lincoln University in 1854 (both in Pennsylvania), blacks, for example, had virtually no opportunity to acquire higher education in large numbers. Those few individual blacks who were admitted to white institutions found prejudice and unequal treatment on campus. Even after black colleges and universities were well established, they could provide higher education to only a small proportion of the black population; have always been plagued with problems of inadequate resource and facilities; and have generally experienced second-class citizenship in the world of higher education.

Second, the character of the setting, the nature of the institution we are examining--that is, the college or university--has a major impact on how institutional racism is manifested and how higher education responds to it. We can distinguish in this regard between traits shared by or affecting all institutions of higher learning, and those variables which help to differentiate between them (remembering always that there is often a close, complex interrelationship among these (contextual variables).

One such differentiating factor is location, particularly whether the institution is located in a rural area, a small town, or an urban areas. This has implications for the availability pool of minority students and staff, as well as for the character of their once on campus. Further, there is the question of region, with implications for particular histories and traditions in the treatment of racial minorities most notably for Hispanics in the southwest and blacks in the south. Regional concentration of minority groups clearly is important here. For blacks, it is no accident that <u>de jure</u> racism in higher education has been greatest in

the south than elsewhere. Even now, as Mingle (1979) indicates, while there has been important progress, the college enrollment of blacks is lower in the south than in the nation, despite generally higher populations levels of blacks in the south than other single region and despite the fact that most of the historically black colleges are these. A further way of looking at the question of region and institutional location is to note that 60% of black college enrollment is concentrated in just ten states: California, New York, Illinois, Texas, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, Florida, Maryland and Louisiana, in that order (U.S. H.E.W., 1978).

The structural diversity of higher education as a whole is another factor in how institutional racism may be expressed and responded to in colleges and universities. For one thing, the American higher educational system is basically a three-tier system: two-year colleges, four-year colleges, and universities. Schools at each level differ on many dimensions from those at the other two. Further, within this three-tier system there is wide variation in the size of institutions, varying from those with no more than a few hundred students to those of thirty thousand students or more on a single campus. Clearly, size differences may play some role in the issue of institutional racism here. Adding to the variety and complexity of the system is the question of control of individual institutions. Some are public and some are private; of the private institutions, some are sectarian and others non-sectarian. In sum, level, size and control are all variables which may influence the character and resolution of issues involving institutional racism, as does the question of whether a school is primarily a residential or commuter institution.

In varying degrees, all colleges and universities serve the same functions and roles in American society. First, in their teaching role they provide education and a higher level of literacy; train individuals for the job market; as well as transmit cultural traditions and basic values (even while presumably encouraging criticism of those traditions), thereby promoting an important degree of socialization among those who will be a part of the more privileged groups in society, and legitimating basic societal values and attitudes at the same time. This is one of the reasons why institutional racism in higher education is such a critical issue, and why colleges and universities must be seen as cultural as well as narrowly educational institutions. In this regard, LeMelle and LeMelle (1969: 62) may well be right when they argue that the

> function of education in both black and white communities has been largely to establish the legitimacy of the values, ideals, and interests of the cominant majority. This has meant the denigration of all other values, ideals and interests, including those of the dependent black minority.

What is true in the case of blacks is certainly true also for other racial and ethnic minorities.

As important centers of research and the expansion of knowledge, whether pure or applied, colleges and universities make a crucial contribution to the material (if not always the spiritual) well-being of society. In their research role they also help define what kinds of knowledge, obtained in which ways, will be considered valid, legitimate or important. In this regard, their influence may go well beyond students and faculty. Minority history and minority experience have not been often considered important knowledge or significant subjects for research.

On the whole, it can be argued that the system of higher education ful-

fills important service roles, for individuals and for society--so much so that it has come to be a fundamental institutional arena, increasingly essential in the life of the nation. Here I refer not only to the teaching and research roles already noted, but to the fact that there is a long tradition of responding to the needs of society by changes in program and curriculum, admission of students, structural changes, the creation of entirely new activities, indeed even of whole colleges and universities. The Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890, as well as the current importance of state and federal funds for most institutions are ample evidence of this tradition of service. The exclusion and inequitable treatment of racial minorities, particularly (though not exclusively) in the case of public institutions, with their official mandate to serve <u>all</u> citizens, is especially glaring in the light of this long service tradition.

Earlier I mentioned the important economic role played by higher education as employer and consumer. Even more curcial is the service role it plays in a broader socio-economic sense in providing direct job training, and credentials or "certification" for employment in the better jobs. In short, its role as educator of human capital makes higher education an integral, indeed fundamental, part of the processes of status allocation in this society, and hence, a basic component of the stratification system. Historically, higher education has served in this role as gate-keeper, primarily to maintain the status quo; many argue (see, e.g., Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Jordan, 1975; Karabel, 1972; and Milner, 1972) that it continues to do so, both for reasons of its close connection to a capitalist economy, and because of continued racism. The criticisms of higher education in this regard are highly persuasive when the situation of racial minorities is

examined.

A character as complex, or formal organizations with organizational imperatives of their own, is a trait shared by all colleges and universities, and one which may influence their actions and responses to questions of institutional racism. I am referring not simply to bureaucratic red tap or impersonality, important as they may be. Rather, what is important to remember is that in all formal organizations, planning, conscious coordination of activities, rationality and effeciency are key and central values. Moreover, however much power may in reality be asymmetrically distributed, in colleges and universities power tends to be exercised and actions taken through processes of deliberation and consenus among a variety of constituent groups with divergent interests, though, hopefully, with shared internalized normative commitments. (This, of course, leaves out the important role of external groups.)

When issues arise whose substantive content of method of presentation (e.g. black studies programs; black student protest; or federal affirmative action pressures) violate central values and agreed-upon procedures, of the institution they are likely to be resisted. Further, even where they may desire to act favorably on policies to redress institutional racism in some area, college or university administrators and faculty may be unable to do so because of strong opposition from their various important internal and external constituencies.

Finally, as Peterson et al (1978: 311) point out:

> Institutions of higher education, despite their reputation for "cognitive rationality," generally act like most other organizations when they move into spheres with which they are unfamiliar.

Demands, and conscious efforts, to redress institutional racism present the

unfamiliar, for which there have been few precedents or guidelines for action. Hence, in colleges and universities as in other organizations, improvisation and reaction, rather than planning and evaluation--and above all, protection of organizational interests--have characterized attempts to deal with issues of racism. The result has been less progress in combatting institutional racism in higher education than might be hoped, despite the fact that formal organizations, including colleges and universities," are much more in control of their nature and destiny than any other social grouping" (Etzioni, 1964).

In addition to all the foregoing factors in colleges and universities which may affect the question of institutional racism, there is also what might be called the social construction of reality in higher education, in the system as a whole as well as on individual campuses. Major elements in this conception include the emphasis on cognitive rationality; on community, collegiality and consensus; and on academic freedom, institutional autonomy and each college or university being something of a closed corporation. Closely connected is the idea that colleges and universities are somehow "above the fray," removed or at least separate from society. This sense of separateness, which on occasion has taken on some of the nuances of the distinction between the sacred and the profane, conflicts with at least some of the service functions and ideals noted earlier, and is increasingly difficult to reconcile with higher education's growing dependence on public funds.

A further element in higher education's internal construction of reality is the ideology of meritocracy: individuals gain access to higher education because of past performance and demonstrated merit objectively measured.

This ideology, and its practical consequences, have been vigorously debated and criticized in relation to questions of minority access to higher education. As Fischer (1974) and others have persuasively argued, this ideology provides much of the rationale for resistance to or negative evaluations of black and other minority students, and of programs aimed at them. (It should be noted that this is also true to some extent in the case of minority faculty.) To quote Rosenberg and Howe (1974: 84), "It is people on top who are most inclined to find the principle of merit a social convenience, for they are persuaded, of course, that their dominance is a consequence of merit."

Another, related component in the social construction of reality we are discussing here is institutional ethos, that set of traditions, values and self-images held by colleges and universities, as well as its varying individual expression in any given institution. This ethos, whether on a single campus or in higher education as a whole, has never been one (excluding the historically black colleges) in which blacks and other minorities have figured importantly or positively. As a result, there has been wide resistance in much of higher education to even admitting the existence of institutional racism, let alone to taking steps to change the situation.

A final component in the social construction of reality in individual institutions are the views held about blacks and other minorities (whether in general or in reference to those on campus) by students, faculty, administrators and staff; and by trustees, donors, and funding sources off campus. Historically, these views have tended to be either highly negative, or indifferent to the point that minorities simply were "invisible." Members of

college or university communities in this regard have been no different from the public at large. At present, individual bigotry, hostility and indifference are still important on and off campus (see Peterson et al, 1978, for a good discussion of issues of interpersonal relations between the races in several colleges and universities).

The last contextual factor in higher education's responses to institutional racism to be noted here is the question of whether the initiating forces or pressures for racial change come from within or outside the institution. One the one hand it could be argued that internally generated changes are more likely to be accepted and more fully implemented than externally generated ones. This may be true to a limited extent. Voluntary decisions by colleges and universities to increase minority enrollments seem to have occasioned less internal resistance than decisions which were perceived to have been the result of coercion. However, internally generated changes are likely to be "willingly" accepted only insofar as they are arrived at through established procedures and do not significantly alter existing arrangements, threaten the interests of significant groups in the institution, or are perceived to threaten the institution's continued well-being. When internally generated efforts to produce change go outside existing procedures or channels, and are perceived as threatening or in violation of cherished values, then resistance can be strong and prolonged. The history of black student protest in white institutions and its ultimate effectiveness demonstrate this clearly. And, the situation in this respect remains much the same today because colleges and universities remain much the same as they were ten or fifteen years ago, before the question of institutional racism in higher education had become such a prominent public issue.

II.

With the preceding discussion of contextual factors in the expression of institutional racism in mind, we need to look at the question of racism in terms of some of the specific issues listed previously. We first take up the issue of access and entry into higher education, beginning with student enrollment, and then turn to the question of hiring faculty and administrators.

The extent of minority inequality of access to higher education has been much discussed in recent years. The severity of the problem can be seen in the fact that as late as 1960, the percentage of blacks with college degrees was lower than the white rate of 1940 (Rosser, 1974), And, as a recent study indicates, greater equality of educational opportunity and attainment between blacks and whites seems to be limited to high school graduation; there is still great inequality in attainment of college education, possibly even greater for younger than for older black cohorts (Featherman and Hauser, 1978).

Clearly the disadvantaged economic position of minority families has been and remains a major impediment to higher education. The same is true of the greater high school drop-out rate and inadequate high school preparation of minority students. For example more black students dropped out of high school in 1977 than enrolled in college (U.S. H.E.W., 1978) However, our concern here is with those barriers which originate in or derive more directly from colleges and universities themselves.

Historically, minority access has been limited by conscious and deliberate policies of exclusion, whether required by law or not. Such deliberate institutional racism has declined considerably in recent years, though it

has not entirely disappeared. Decisions, for example, about which minority groups to recruit and how many, ostensibly made on grounds of cultural differences and concern for the student's welfare ("we don't have any Hispanics in this area or on campus; they would feel lost and isolated"), or on grounds of presumed cost ("Well, you know, they'll all need financial aid and expensive support programs"), could arguably be called deliberate racism. Only the justifications are different: the consequence of exclusion is the same.

Access barriers resulting from presumably neutral institutional policies have become increasingly apparent in the last twenty years. Admissions policies, for example, have come under intense scrutiny. Biases in admissions testing and requirements, along with the use of inappropriate measures and criteria for admissions, all of which serve to screen out minorities, have been noted by a number of observers (Bowles and Gintis, 1976: Farver, Sedlacek and Brooks, 1975; Institute for the Study of Educational Policy, 1976; and Sedlacek and Brooks, 1976, among a great many others). Recent research has cast even further doubt on the fairness and validity of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, perhaps the single most widely used admissions test, by demonstrating that it is possible, despite the arguments of the College Entrance Examination Board to the contrary, to raise students' scores through training and studying (Stack and Porter, 1980). Thus, those who don't study, either because they think they don't have to or that it won't work, or because they simply do not have the opportunities for preparation--a situation frequently true for minority students--are placed at a real disadvantage and may be deprived of admission to colleges of their choice, if not to college, period.

Financial aid policies, presumably neutral, are another important barrier to minority access, not least because the economic costs of higher education make financial aid crucial for minority students. Full-time study requirements may make it difficult for those who have to work substantial hours to attend many institutions. This can be an especial problem at the graduate level. As institutions, faced with the financial exigencies resulting from an ailing economy, move increasingly to financial aid packages for students in which the grant component is decreased and the loan component is enlarged, they place an ever greater economic burden on minority students and their families in financing higher education at a time when, again because of an ailing economy, it is harder for them to afford it. As a recent report published by the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1979) points out, over fifty-five percent of black undergraduates now have major loans in order to pay for their education, and at the graduate level, most of the financial aid available is in the form of loans.

Further, the recent emphasis in higher education on financial aid to the middle class may have long-term detrimental effects on minority access. As family income eligibility ceilings rise (in some cases to $30,000 or $35,000 a year), without significant growth in the total amount of financial aid available, whether from institutional or governmental sources, there is increasing competition for the scarce resources of financial aid--a competition in which minority students may not do well at all. This situation is made ven more ominous for minorities as some institutions respond to declining enrollments by moving to merit rather than need as the basis for awarding aid.

Other kinds of ostensibly neutral economic policies undertaken by

institutions of higher education may also negatively impact on minority access. Given the current economic situation in the United States, many colleges and universities are faced with the necessity of cutting costs in a variety of areas. The common term for this, of course, is retrenchment. In retrenchment, those policies and programs deemed least essential or too costly in some cost-benefit analysis are likely to disappear. Special recruitment and admissions programs, special remedial and support programs, financial aid (along with curricular programs)--all in some sense aimed at minority students--may be costly, perhaps too costly in the eyes of faculty, administrators and/or trustees. The net result may be a reduction or the elimination of these programs, with a comparable loss of access by minorities (see Peterson et al, 1978, for a good discussion of some of these possibilities).

In the last fifteen years, because of greater concern with minority access, many colleges and universities have taken some steps to try to deal with the situation outlined above. However, many of these barriers continue to exist in one form or another, and there is no reason to assume that they will disappear any time soon.

Even when significant steps have been taken to insure greater equality of access, the results often are not wholly successful, despite measurable progress. The theoretical argument why this is so has been suggested by a number of observers, notably Bowles and Gintis (1976) (See also Lavin et al, 1979). Their argument is that the educational system, at all levels, is closely tied to and reinforces the existing system of social stratification in the United States because of education's basic links to the capitalist economic system and its hierarchical division of labor. Hence,

in their view, simply achieving equality of access to higher education would not insure equality of educational opportunity or equal results. Trying to achieve equal access alone does not take into account the internal stratification, differentiation and tracking within higher education, nor does it consider that different groups begin at different starting points, with varying resources and face differing barriers. The result is that minority groups like blacks and Hispanics are disproportionately concentrated in the two-year, public and less prestigious institutions, being trained for lower level clerical and technical jobs. Further, even with equal access, income and occupational status attainment as a result of higher education are not equalized. Blacks still receive lower returns for higher education than whites (see Featherman and House, 1978 for additional support for this argument). Thus, as long as long as the basic nature of our economic system and education's participation in it remain the same, inequality of access and opportunity in higher education will continue.

The most well-known attempts to increase minority access have occurred in the state system of higher education in California, and most particularly in the open admissions programs of the City University of New York. A recent study of the first five years of open admissions at CUNY by Lavin, et al (1979) suggests that open admissions has been successful in increasing equality of access to higher education for groups in New York City, without any "definitive" evidence of a decline in academic standards. They found that minority students not only have greater access than before, but are also more equitably distributed within CUNY, even though stratification of minority students (i.e. concentration in the two-year and less prestigious colleges of the system) continues.

At the same time, large numbers of whites have benefitted significantly from open admissions, including not only white ethnics who had not been well represented previously, but also large numbers of students from groups traditionally well-represented in CUNY (e.g. Jewish students). Significantly, these new white students come from the same class backgrounds as traditional CUNY students. In short, this research found a real "paradox of open admissions":

> While benefits do flow to those intended to receive them, they also flow unintentionally to others, and often the latter, possessing more resources than the former, are better able to take advantage of the new opportunities. (Lavin et al, 1979: 86)

In addition, the "political heat of the fiscal crisis" of New York City Lavin et al, 1979: 88) has produced significant changes in the open admissions policy which call into question whether past progress in reducing inequities will continue. Students must now be in the top thirty-five percent of their class, rather than the top half as previously. Faculty retrenchment has occurred at the expense of those providing remedial and counseling services which helped make open admissions a success. Free tuition has been abolished, without great increases in financial aid. At the same time, the city's fiscal crisis has resulted in retrenchment in secondary education, including a reduction in the number of high school guidance counselors, with a resultant information gap about the opportunities still available at CUNY--an important gap since the public's perception is that open admission is over. In short, there is now greatly decreased enrollment among all groups, especially minority groups. As Lavin et al (1979: 88) conclude,

> ...when fiscal pressures were overwhelming, political leaders responded by supporting exactly those alternatives that attacked the student constituences most directly served by open admissions.

The current situation in what was perhaps the most significant attempt within a single educational system to increase minority access suggests much of the difficulty involved in such attempts, and is indicative of the degree to which institutional racism, albeit perhaps unintended, remains a major problem.

Another way of looking at minority access is to look at some enrollment figures which indicate both progress and continuing problems. In 1964, only 3% of all college students were black. According to data from the U.S. Office of Civil Rights (1978), black enrollment in higher education grew from 287,000 students (6.0% of total college enrollment) in 1968 to over a million students (10.6% of total college enrollment) in 1978. Moreover, blacks are enrolling more of their age-eligible population (the 18-24 year old group) than before, going from 13% of this age group in 1967 to 21% in 1977 (whites, however, in 1977 enrolled 27% of the same age group) (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1978).

Whereas at one time the majority of black students were in black institutions (51% in 1964), today this is no longer the case, with 70% of black students now enrolled in predominantly white institutions. However, nearly 40% of all baccalaureate degrees are awarded by the predominantly black colleges, (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979), suggesting something about the attrition of black students in white institutions. It also indicates the fact that of those black students <u>not</u> enrolled in black colleges, <u>half</u> are concentrated in two-year institutions; the rest are more likely to be in public than private institutions, and are very much underrepresented at the university level (15% for blacks as opposed to 27% for whites) U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). Thus, even granting some real progress, the picture of black undergraduate enrollment is not entirely happy. Over concentration

in lower-level and less prestigious institutions indicates that many of the barriers to equal access at all levels of higher education are still operative. And, in the current era of rising costs for education and shrinking institutional, and minority family, resources it is difficult to be optimistic that past progress will be maintained.

This is of even more critical importance when we look at minority enrollment in graduate and professional degree programs, where progress has been real but less substantial and less well sustained. As with undergraduate enrollment, there is a long history of minorities' unequal access to post-baccalaureate education. For example, between 1876 and 1943, only three hundred and seventy nine Ph.D.'s were awarded to blacks; between 1944 and 1968 blacks earned fewer than 1% of all Ph.D.'s (Fleming et al, 1978). In 1964-65 blacks were only 3% of all graduate students (U.S. Dept of H.E.W., 1965). In 1973 that percentage had only risen to between 4% and 5% of all graduate students (Institute for the Study of Social Policy, 1976), and reached 6% in 1976-77 (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). In 1974-75, only 3.6% of Ph.D.'s awarded went to blacks and 1.3% to Hispanics (National Academy of Sciences, 1975), while the number of black doctorates in the physical sciences declined after 1975 (Fleming et al, 1978).

Another way to look at the question of minority graduate enrollment and graduation can be found by noting that in 1974 only 8% of blacks aged 25-34 had completed four or more years of college compared with 21% of the same aged whites (Fleming et al, 1978). In 1976, 20% of all black graduate students were in predominantly black institutions (whose graduate enrollments has grown from 8500 in 1967 to 20,000 in 1973), indicating that without the graduate programs in predominantly black institutions, the picture would be

even more discouraging (National Board on Graduate Education, 1976). A final indication of the degree to which access to graduate education has lagged behind undergraduate access (perhaps necessarily, given history) can be seen in the fact that in 1978-79, of 65,000 black graduate students than enrolled, 63.4% were in their first year (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). In all cases, blacks continue to be underrepresented in engineering, the biological and physical sciences.

Professional education does not show much greater access of minorities. In 1975-76, 4.3% of all first professional degrees were awarded to blacks (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1978), while in 1975-76, 4.5% of all students in professional schools were blacks. Medical and law school admissions of black students appear to have peaked in 1971 and declined since then. For example, black enrollment in law schools declined 8.6% between 1976 and 1977, while the decline for all minorities was 2.7%, and only 0.6% for whites (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). In the same period, black enrollment in medical schools declined 1.9% while white enrollment increased 2.5% (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). Between 1977 and 1978 the decline of black enrollment, in absolute numbers, was 173 first-year law students, and 21 first-year medical students (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979). Minority enrollment in graduate business schools appears to have peaked at 7% in 1973 and remained at that level through 1978; in these schools minority enrollment is only slightly higher than the enrollment of foreign students (Gale, 1978).

All of this indicates that the barriers to graduate and professional education remain strong. Partly, in the case of graduate business education this may reflect some continued hostility to corporate America on the part of minorities. Certainly it may reflect the inadequacy of recruitment and ad-

missions policies, whether through deliberate neglect or the setting of limits on the number of minority students admitted, or "simply" through ineffective policies and procedures. In the post-Bakke era, it may reflect some caution on the part of admissions committees, particularly where guidelines for minority admission which would meet the requirements set forth in the Supreme Court decision have not been arrived at or fully institutionalized. Most crucial, however, is the question of money: the economic costs of post-baccalaureate education; the reality or lower economic resources possessed by minority students and their families; and the fact that financial aid at this level is most readily available (where available at all) in the form of loans--a not very attractive prospect to those already burdened by loans obtained to finance undergraduate education. One indication of this economic burden is that minority students are much more likely to be enrolled as part-time students while holding part-time, if not indeed full-time jobs. This means that they are likely to take a longer time to finish a graduate program, with a correspondingly greater likelihood of not finishing at all. While Federal aid programs have made a big difference in assisting minority access at the graduate (and undergraduate) level, nothing currently in prospect gives us any more grounds for optimism than in the case of undergraduate enrollment.

Given the situation of inequitable black and other minority access to education, it is not surprising that minorities continue to be greatly underrepresented as faculty or administrators, whether one considers the broader question of employment in higher education as a whole, or more narrowly (but perhaps more crucially), the question of employment in predominantly white institutions. It is the latter case which concerns us

most here.

As in the case of enrollment, historically this has been due primarily to deliberate exclusion and segregation, at all levels of the education system. There were some exceptions: in the case of blacks, Richard Greener, the first black graduate of Harvard, taught physics at the University of South Carolina from 1873 to 1877; William A. Hinton began as an instructor at Harvard in 1921 and rose to full professor by the time he retired in 1950 (though he had to spend twenty-six years at the rank of instructor, three as lecturer, and was only appointed professor the year before he retired); Allison Davis was appointed to a full-time position at the University of Chicago in 1941, partly as a result of financial support to the university from the Julius Rosenwald Fund; and Abram Harris was appointed in economics at the same institution in 1946 (Fleming et al, 1978). However, the list of those excluded before 1950 who were eminently qualified to teach in any white institution as regular full-time faculty reads like an American intellectual and scholarly who's who: W.E.B. DuBois; Carter G. Woodson; Sterling Brown; Rayford Logan; Charles Drew; Percy Julian; Charles Johnson; Ira Reid; Ralph Bunche; Kenneth Clark, and a host of others. Even granting the comparatively small number of "qualified" black scholars, the exclusion of such scholars can only be seen as the result of deliberate policy.

By 1950, only 72 of 1051 white colleges surveyed employed black teachers, and many of these "only as visiting lecturers for a summer, a semester of for a year" (Fleming et al, 1978: 28). By 1958, only 200 blacks were teaching on a regular, full-time basis in white institutions; three years later this number had risen to 300.

In 1960 blacks were 3% of all college and university teachers (heavily concentrated in the historically black institutions); in 1968-69, 2.2% of the total (a year when blacks were 11% of the total American work force); and in 1972-73, 2.9% of the total number of college and university faculty (Fleming et al, 1978). Between 1965 and 1975 the overall proportion of black faculty in white colleges and universities did not change in any significant degree, despite ostensibly intensified efforts by many institutions to hire black faculty (Lipset and Ladd, 1975). By 1975-76 blacks had only risen to 4.4% of the total number of college and university faculty, still concentrated in the predominantly black institutions (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1978).

All of this points clearly to the difficulty of breaking the entry barriers into the critical teaching, decision and policy making positions of higher education, as well as pointing up again the fundamental importance of affirmative action programs in the attempt to redress matters. Within higher education (and in the wider society), however, affirmative action has engendered the most intense debate and opposition, much more so than questions of admission during the same period, indicating how much is at stake--not only access to jobs, but to power and influence within a basic institutional arena as well.

This is not the place to examine the pros and cons of affirmative action in higher education (a vitally necessary effort, I believe), nor the history of its successes and failures. It seems to fair to say that whatever progress has made in increasing the numbers of minority faculty and administrators in predominantly white institutions is due in important part to affirmative action requirements. It is equally fair to say that affirmative action has

not succeeded in breaking many barriers which still exist. Recruitment procedure may change, some relatively few minorities may be recruited, but all too often the final hiring decision is the same: the non-minority candidate gets the job (for purposes of this discussion I am excluding non-minority women from the category "minority"). The way in which availability estimates of the pool of potential minority candidates made; the procedures and levels at which hiring goals are set; the way in which advertising and recruitment is handled (the "old-boy network" is still alive and well); the academic selection criteria employed in evaluating a minority candidate; administrative leadership and pressure from deans and others--all affect whether or not affirmative action efforts will result in significant real change or only in small, symbolic steps.

One of the best studies of how affirmative action efforts may <u>not</u> result in a major increase of minority faculty can be found in the research of Steele and Green (1976). Among other things, they found that departments tend to set aside a small number of positions for which they will seek minority faculty (if they attempt to recruit minorities at all). As they put it, "equal opportunity was apparently restricted to those positions set aside to symbolize equal opportunity" (p.424).

If the position is not filled by a minority candidate during the year of first recruitment, it may not be held open for continued recruitment effort the following year. If no acceptable minority candidate is found, the position may well be filled by someone else. On the other hand, if a minority candidate is found, and hence compliance with affirmative action can be regarded as having been achieved, there is often a dramatic drop-off in further offers to minorities, to the point that advertising and recruit-

ment for subsequent positions may change. Indeed, to quote Steele and Green (1976: 425):

> ...subsequent efforts to find qualified minorities and to pursue their candidacy drops off so profoundly as to create, from the vantage point of other minorities looking for employment, a form of postcompliance discrimination.

Finally, whereas many critics of affirmative action have opposed it on the grounds that it would institute quota for the majority, Steele and Green argue that it is really a menas of establishing quotas for minorities, quotas which insure only a small number of minority individuals will be hired. To quote them once again (p.431):

> Despite its better intentions, affirmative action policy has been implemented...as essentially a quota system. ....In the case of minorities, the effect of the policy was limited to quota maintenance...where after reaching the minority quota, minority hiring stopped.

Even where minority faculty are hired, difficulties attributable in part to institutional racism are not ended. Black faculty, for example, in white institutions are more concentrated in the lower ranks and in non-tenurable position than their white counterparts. Not only does this mean less influence in the college or university because of lower rank and concern about jeopardizing possibilities for tenure (where they exist), but lower rank also means lower salaries. Indeed, even at the same rank, blacks earn less than whites, contrary to some popular opinion and individual exceptions (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1978). While salary differentials are clearly a consequence of differences in rank, salary discrimination against minorities is still a potential problem, particularly if "salary differentials can be blamed on non-racial factors such as age and degree qualification" (Traynham and Green, 1977: 41).

Lastly, for those on tenure tracks, there is the problem of attaining tenure. Once again, simple prejudice on the part of those making tenure decisions may play a role. Political stances or activities by the tenure candidate which are deemed inappropriate or threatening by decision-makers may work to the detriment of the minority (as well as non-minority) candidate. Many of the professional activities minority faculty are expected or required to undertake (e.g. teaching; counseling minority students; committee work; representing the institution whenever its symbolic belief in equal opportunity needs to be demonstrated), however valuable or rewarding they may be, are often not the kinds that are rewarded by tenure--though they may well take time and energy from research and publishing, the activities that <u>are</u> rewarded with tenure. This is not a new issue so I won't belabor it here (see Moore and Wagstaff, 1974, e.g., for a more extensive discussion). However, it does indicate one more facet of institutionally-based racism. Selection criteria prevalent in white American colleges and universities, whatever their "objective" neutrality or validity as a measure of merit, may work against both the hiring and the retention of minority faculty by underrewarding the activities and ignoring or underestimating the pressures on minority faculty.

Clearly, the battle to gain entry into higher education, especially predominantly white institutions, has been a fundamental measure of institutional racism in higher education, whether one is concerned with students or faculty. However, of equal importance is what happens once entry is attained. This is the issue of on-campus experiences and attrition. Here, we are primarily concerned with students rather than faculty (see Moore and Wagstaff, 1974, for a good discussion of this issue with respect to faculty). As a recent

report from the National Advisory Committee on Black Higher Education and Black Colleges and Universities puts it, "to view total enrollment gains in isolation from the quality of participation and the end product--college graduation--is dangerous" (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979: xi). Once on campus students may well experience a variety of forms of racism, individual as well as institutional.

For the white college or university, increased numbers of black or other minority students represents the appearance on campus of a group who are racially visible, and in a variety of other ways different from the students the institution traditionally has had. As a result, black students have often been met with mistrust, wariness, hostility and direct personal expressions of bigotry from others, whether students, faculty or staff. Stereotyped views of black or minority students are often held by others in the institution: all black students are poorly prepared academically; all of them come from inner city communities; all are on financial aid because they are economically lower class; they're in the institution only because they got in under relaxed standards or some special program; they're all good athletes, and so on. Rather than being seen as adding to or enhancing the richness of the educational experience in the college or university, black and minority students may be seen as somehow damaging it, taking something away from it threatening something precious, almost sacrosanct (for example, "academic standards"). Like all stereotypes, these present a grossly distored picture of who minority students are, but a picture, and the reactions it engenders, with which black and other minority students have to cope.

Equally, for many black students, the white college represents a very new setting and experience, one for which little in their background and

previous experience may have prepared them. Their backgrounds and attributes may make them as a group different in some ways from their fellow white students, a difference not always appreciated or honored in the white college. Because of this, in combination with having to deal with others 'possibly distorted perceptions and reactions, black and other minority students are likely to experience a real sense of difference, isolation, stress, disjuncture and alienation on the white campus. Indeed, as a number of observers have noted, black student alienation in, and from, the white college or university is high (e.g. Boyd, 1974; Braddock, 1978; Dejoie, 1977; Exum, 1974, 1978; Willie and McCord, 1972).

In short, the combination of minority students own attributes, the character of a college or university as a place where minority concerns and experiences receive little validation, or attention and the reactions of others in the institution to minority students creates a situation in which the impact on the students themselves can be quite severe. Minority students in this sense may be forced to carry an extra social psychological burden in their pursuit of an education, a burden which may adversely affect the quality of their educational experience and their successful completion of degree requirements. Whether or not the institution is aware or conscious of this dimension of minority students' experience of the college or university, to the degree it does not act to alleviate them or acts in an ineffective or half-hearted manner, than we may speak of an additional kind of institutional racism since this is clearly a situation in which minority students have greater adverse experiences or potential difficulties to deal with than other students.

Even worse is the situation in which the institution gives the <u>appearance</u> of being responsive and caring about minority students, while perpetuating

or allowing alienating underlying conditions to persist. In this situation, the individual is likely to feel not only alienated, but also inauthentic. As Etxioni (1968; 632) points out, the person who is alienated feels estranged, powerless and sees no meaning in what he does; the person who is involved inauthentically in some institutional structure feels "cheated and manipulated," feels "that he has been made...to bless his captors if not his tormentors." The contemporary white college or university seems, as experienced by many black or minority students, clearly to be an inauthentic institution.

This kind of structurally based inauthenticity may be seen as a further kind of institutional racism. It is reflected in the fact that often while making great, and well-publicized, efforts to recruit minority students (thereby presenting an image of concern for them), colleges and universities have continued to tolerate conditions in which: most extracurricular activities are oriented to white students and do not reflect black or minority interests; there are few minority personnel in key positions, few minority faculty, and hence few minority role models for students; too few, if any, minority counselors knowledgeable about minority student interests and problems; programs for minority students are often understaffed, underfunded and incompletely institutionalized where they exist al all; aside from separate or specially designated curricular programs, there is little recognition given elsewhere in the academic program to minority histories and cultures (see Feagin and Feagin, 1978; Mingle, 1978; Peterson et al, 1978; Rosser, 1974; and Sedlacek and Brooks, 1976, for a more extended discussion).

In short, "there is evidence to suggest that the whole sociocultural

process for a minority student attending college is different from that of a white" (Sedlacek and Brooks, 1976: 52). Much of the reason for that difference is institutional racism. One result of that difference may be greater problems of attrition for minority students. Some suggestion of this can be found in the already noted point that while the majority of black students are in white institutions, black colleges and universities still award a disproportionate number of the undergraduate degrees earned by black students (see Rosser, 1974; and U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1979, for further discussion of attrition; also Lavin et al, 1979, who present counter evidence that minority attrition is not higher). While the evidence for greater rates of minority student attrition is not entirely clear or consistent, there seems little doubt that they face conditions which pose greater barriers, social and psychological, to successful completion of their education.

In addition to issues of access and on-campus experiences, there are a number of other questions which might be addressed in examining institutional racism in higher education. Because of space limitations, all of these cannot be addressed at length here. However, of particular importance is the question of institutional racism in the curriculum, not just the question of the direct teaching of racist views, but more crucially the question of whether and to what extent minority cultures and history receive just and equitable attention. The most prominent issues in this regard had involved black studies and ethnic or Third World studies.

Several difficulties have come up in regard to such curriculum issues. First there has been the continuing question of the intellectual validity of black or ethnic studies. Many were not persuaded (and are not now) of the

intellectual and educational benefits of justifications of having such programs. Further, there have been the often thorny and conflicted questions of what form such curriculum additions should take, how such programs should be structured, who should run them, how they should be evaluated, and how they fit into the existing curricular program. The battle over black and Third World studies was often intense, occasionally violent and bloody, resulting in some real accomplishments, but not a great deal of fundamental change.

Following the peak period of student activism (1968-1971), approximately 1300 schools (excluding the predominantly black institutions) has at least one black studies course in its curriculum, and 500 had instituted formal black studies programs. (Allen, 1974) 62% had some kind of program of black, Third World, or ethnic studies program (Bayer and Astin, 1971). By the end of 1972-73 182 institutions offered majors, and 96 offered minors in black studies (Peterson et al, 1978). Such programs, however, were, and are, not distributed equally throughout the system of higher education. Ethnic and black studies are most common in universities (over 81% of universities offer at least one course), and least common in two-year institutions (only 37% of such school offer at least one course) (Peterson et al, 1978)--precisely the schools where minority students are most concentrated.

Further, given the large number of institutions of higher education, it is clear that a great many schools made few if any changes in their historic curriculum exclusion of minorities. Indeed, as recently as 1975, when it could be argued that the pressure to establish such offerings had lessened substantially, at least 20% of four-year institutions had never instituted any kind of black or ethnic studies program (Astin, Astin et al, 1975). Many

still do not offer even a single course. Further, by 1974, the number of schools offering formal programs had declined from 500 to 200 (Allen, 1974). Many programs have folded; many others are in difficulty; some have achieved vitality and are increasingly institutionalized . The latter are most likely to be in the major, more prestigious universities (Hechinger, 1980; Wilkins, 1975).

Another issue of institutional racism which can only be mentioned briefly here is the role and place of the predominantly black institutions, now and in the future. As Rosser (1974: 245) has put it,

> Today, the black colleges and universities are being placed in a somewhat different and more difficult position. Their very existence is being threatened on many levels and, paradoxically, they are being forced to fight to maintain their identity as <u>black</u> institutions. (emphasis in original)

Black colleges and universities have always been inequitably treated and inadequately funded in comparison with white institutions, often as much by law as by the prejudiced choices of those in power within higher education given the location of most of these institutions in the south. Funding and resource inequities continue. For example, in fiscal 1975, federal agencies awarded a total of $14.9 billion to all institutions of higher education. Only $240 million or 4.9% went to the 109 predominantly black colleges. Indeed, federal funding for those colleges declined 13.1% between 1974 and 1975, even though enrollment in these schools rose 5.5% during the same period (U.S. Dept. of H.E.W., 1978). Similar inequities can be found in funding from state and private sources, (see Hill, 1975) to say nothing of the vast differences in institutional endowments between black and white schools.

Despite this situation, black colleges and institutions have been, and

continue to be, crucial to the education of black Americans. Vernon Jordan put it well when he observed:

> Today as in the past, the black colleges provide the training and dedication offered reluctantly, if at all by their more prestigious brother institutions. It is the black colleges that have graduated 75 percent of all black Ph.D.'s, 75 percent of all black army officers, 80 percent of all federal judges, and 85 percent of all black doctors. (1975: 165)

And as earlier indicated, they continue to graduate nearly 40% of all black baccalaureates (with only 30% of black enrollment), 69% of all black B.A.'s in the south, even though in the south they have only 43% of total black enrollment in college (Brown, 1980).

At present, in addition to the perrenial problems of resources and facilities, the biggest threat to black institutions comes, paradoxically, from the federal courts which, in decisions such as Adams vs. Califano, have struck down dual systems in higher education; and from the way in which local authorities, particularly state educational authorities, have chosen to implement such decisions. While the court stressed that the black institutions were not to bear a disproportionate part of the burden in such changes, this has not always been the case. Integration in this sense has not proved to be an unmixed blessing. Black schools have become predominantly white, absorbed into white systems, or closed entirely. One of the consequences of this can be seen in the case of Florida where, following the closing of black junior colleges, there was a drastic decline in black student college enrollment, despite special programs and provisions for black students in other state institutions. In short, black colleges and universities continue to serve a vital, indeed critical role in the education of blacks, while facing enormous pressures and difficulties of existence. Institutional racism in the sense

of this situation is still very much alive.

III.

Where does all this leave us? Perhaps this is best assessed by asking two questions. First, has there been change, and if there has been, what kinds and in what areas? It seems clear that in terms of access and entry of minorities into higher education, significant strides in reducing institutional racism have been made, greater for undergraduate enrollment than for graduate or for the hiring of minority faculty and administrators. Once in the institution, minorities no longer face, except in unusual and infrequent circumstances, the more blatant and direct forms of racism (e.g. not being allowed to live in college or university dormitories). In at least some institutions curriculum more accurately reflects social reality and human history than before. And there is some real awareness of the significant role of black colleges and universities, and concern for their future.

There has been change. Institutional racism in some of its forms and manifestations has been reduced. However, I think it can be suggested that what has occurred is more accurately characterized as adaptive, rather than structural reform. That is, institutions of higher education through the decisions and policies of those who run them, have responded to political pressures (both internal and external) and new social realities in ways which produce some change in policy or practice sufficient to be measurable, to reduce pressures for change, but which do not alter in any fundamental way the basic structure or operation of the institution. I am not necessarily impugning personal motivations or integrity (though as individuals, policy-makers and others at all levels in higher education have been no less racist than anyone else). Indeed, many of those pushing for change or charged with

implementing it have been sincerely dedicated to reducing institutional racism. Rather, to quote Peterson et al (1978: 317):

> it is clear...that moral fervor has its limits for long-run commitment. It may provide the momentum for a new direction, but it is not sufficient to carry decisions to the point of institutionalization...

If one raises a crucial second question--how large have been the changes, how lasting and how sufficient--then the answer is just as clearly: not large enough, not permanent enough, not sufficient. Inequities based in institutional racism continue to be marked, whether in terms of minority access to or distribution within higher education. On-campus experiences are still highly alienating. Support programs and resources are still inadequate, and problems of minority attrition may still be great. Too often curricular changes have proven fragile and impermanent. And black colleges and universities continue to be faced with all their old difficulties, plus the new ones of competing for black students and faculty with white institutions, while, in the case of state supported schools, fighting to keep from being put out of business.

In short, though much has changed, much remains the same, with in some instances new elements added. Perhaps the most crucial of these is the current financial crisis facing higher education as well as the larger society. Put simply, reducing or eliminating the kinds of institutional racism we have discussed is likely to be an expensive proposition--or at least is likely to be perceived as being expensive. Because of the limits of moral fervor and personal commitment to racial justice, where it exists; because of intense competition or opposition from a variety of interests and constituencies which may be strong and influential; and because programs

and policies aimed at minorities are insufficiently institutionalized, are not part of tradition, have too few allies and too little basic impact on the institution--for all these reasons the current financial crisis poses possibly grave problems for the fight against institutional racism. It is difficult to be sanguine about the prospects for continued progress, and there are good reasons for being concerned about maintaining that which has been achieved.

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